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THURSDAY, APRIL 1, 1909.

Mr. Taft's Offer to Dr. Eliot.

President Taft has done a popular and a commendable thing in offering to Charles W. Eliot the post of Ambassador to Great Britain. There has been a growing feeling throughout the country that our representatives abroad should stand for something more than social position or vast wealth; that they should be distinguished for other qualities than those of the showy entertainer with plenty of cash at his back. The issue which was successfully fought out at Berlin needs to be met in London also. By sending Dr. Eliot thither we should be returning to the loftier traditions of an earlier day, when our envoys to the Court of St. James were the best products of our civilization, exemplifying our intellectual life and our democracy and true American ideals. Dr. Eliot has for many years held a commanding position in American life. His influence has been felt from one end of the land to the other, and it has always been exercised for the higher things of our civilization. Moreover, he is a true interpreter of the American genius and a firm believer in American institutions. He would be representative of our best character and purpose.

All that mars this happy selection is the meager provision the United States makes for the support and emolument of its ambassadors. Dr. Eliot, like every other man of his stamp, must wrestle with the question whether he can afford to live in London as American Ambassador. We hope he may be able to answer it in the affirmative. But it is a question which Congress should not compel men of small means and great abilities to consider. One of the extraordinary meannesses of Congressional economy is this very matter of ambassadorial salaries and perquisites. It has resulted, as has been shown over and over again, in throwing the diplomatic service into the hands of wealthy aspirants for social distinction, or in parceling out diplomatic posts to heavy contributors to party funds. Yet Congress has repeatedly refused to apply the simple remedy of providing a sufficient salary, not necessarily an extravagant one, and a reasonably commodious establishment.

To assure Dr. Eliot's acceptance of the London post, some enthusiastic Harvard men are said to have proposed the raising of a fund to eke out the ambassadorial salary. The mere suggestion should put Congress to shame. Our ambassadors should not be dependent on their own funds or the funds of others. They should be provided for by the government which sends them abroad, and Harvard men could do no better service to the country than to insist that Congress adjust ambassadorial emolument to a proper standard. In view of the present New England ascendancy in that body, particularly in the Senate, we should judge this a good time to press a very necessary reform.

"The little jokers cropping up day by day come pretty near making it a tariff forever," says the Springfield Union. And yet, those little jokers themselves constitute an old story.

Sassafras and the Tariff.

We regret to note that the Payne tariff bill is silent in respect of sassafras, that great friend of the common people and reputed dispenser of "that tired feeling" inevitably incident to the subtle evolution of the glad and gleesome springtime.

Sassafras ought to be on the free list specifically, emphatically, and unequivocally. It should be there not alone because of the proposed tax on tea, but very much for that reason, nevertheless. Besides the vast quantity grown in this country, it flourishes beautifully in Australia, New Zealand, Brazil, and Chile. Each variety has its own peculiar qualifications as something from which may be concocted a wholesome, healthful, palatable drink, and its widespread use would tend, therefore, to make us happier and more nearly at peace with mankind in general.

There are wise physicians in this day and time who hoot at the humble sassafras in so far as concerns its alleged tonic and alterative attributes. It may be that they are right, and that sassafras has no particularly logical or sensible standing in the materia medica. But none of them attach any harmful effects to its assimilation in the form of a beverage, save, perhaps, such as might result from inhibiting an unskillful brew. So the benefit of every doubt may be given sassafras, no matter whether we accept the germ theory of disease, or hark back to more ancient ideas, and see in sassafras a highly potent and valuable drug. If no specific physical benefit follows its use, nothing by way of harm is ever attendant in its train. And that, after all, is probably more than one may say of tea or coffee.

Wherefore, delighting as we do to raise a voice, even as one crying in the wilderness, in behalf of the downtrodden consumer now and then, we demand, in

behalf of the people who ultimately must pay all the tariff freight, the free admission of sassafras into this country, in any and all circumstances, and at any and all times its introduction may be sought. If there filters through our minds an occasional idea the application of which to material conditions may incline to lift the breakfast-table burden from the masses and shift it to the classes, both the masses and the classes may expect us to deliver ourselves of it publicly and unflinchingly. And right now, in our philosophy, is the psychological moment to swing high the banner of free sassafras, and give notice of battle in case Congress hesitates to lend ear to our desires. In fact, sassafras on the free list might operate to relieve the tariff bill of many Paynterful and distressing ailments too numerous to mention, but existing, nevertheless.

The only possible fly in this tempting ointment, so to speak, is the chance that the old-time doctors are right, and that sassafras enormously whets the appetite! If that should prove true, behold a "little joker," as usual, and down would come our beautiful and honestly-conceived cause in Spain.

There is one man in this world who will be thoroughly disgusted, not to say downright sore, if the Sob Squad gets on that African trail, and the first letter of his name is Theodore Roosevelt.

Rear Admiral Converse.

Rear Admiral George A. Converse, U. S. N., retired, who died at his home in this city on Monday night, failed of the fame which made a name a household word. He had none of the inclinations which would ever have made him a spectacular leader. His modesty of bearing, his unwillingness to pose, his determination to make service interests more conspicuous than his individual opinions, contributed to this lack of what so many men in public life regard as a reward of virtue—popular applause.

But he was no less a hero by all the standards which justify public recognition of that type. He served the country in many important and responsible positions, on shore and at sea. His active career extended to the very day of his death, and since he reached the retiring age he had been especially valuable in an advisory capacity as president of the naval board of construction. He was one of the ablest of ordnance officers, having served as chief of ordnance of the navy, and was an independent, conscientious chief of the Bureau of Navigation, discharging the perplexing duties of that office with impartiality which operated in the face of political interference. Rear Admiral Converse was the type of naval officer who reflected great credit upon the service. His unflinching adherence to what he believed to be right, his determination to stand by the best interests of the service as he recognized those interests, and his exalted standard of personal character marked Rear Admiral Converse as a man whose life might well be taken as an incentive to the younger members of the naval profession and as a worthy example of American citizenship. Rear Admiral Converse was the sort of man to whom public tribute may be unhesitatingly and unreservedly given.

This "Salome" dance is merely vice wearing unblushingly the cloak of the devil," says an Indiana preacher. Well, considering the climatic conditions of the Old Nick's headquarters, we hardly blame him for affecting such a cloak.

Mr. Braxton on Railroad Regulation.

A recent address by A. Caperton Braxton, the eminent Virginia lawyer, has attracted attention by reason of its virtual confession that State regulation of railway rates is more or less of a failure. Mr. Braxton was the creator of the Virginia corporation commission, and has made a profound study of the problem of corporate regulation, so that his views carry unusual weight. In his address he admitted a strong inclination to the view that the regulation of all railroad rates, intrastate as well as interstate, should be exclusively a matter of Federal control, leaving to the States only local regulation in matters other than the regulation of rates. Mr. Braxton gave two reasons for surrendering rate regulation wholly to the national government: First, that under the decisions of the Supreme Court the regulation of intrastate rates is, as a matter of fact, taken out of the hands of the States and put into those of Federal courts, which now have absolute control of it; and second, that intrastate and interstate rates are so interdependent and inseparable that it is practically impossible to subject them to independent regulation.

Mr. Braxton's observation has led him to the belief that the ordinary courts are unsuited to the functions of rate regulation; and he therefore proposes the creation of special tribunals charged with these functions. His suggestions on this point are put in the form of an inquiry:

"In view of the vast amount of work involved in Federal regulation, and in view of the importance of familiarity with local conditions, and of speedy action, and of the availability of the machinery to the parties, should not the Federal machinery for regulation be reorganized somewhat on the plan of the Federal judiciary system; that is, that the whole Union be divided up into, say, eight or ten transcontinental districts, with reference to their commercial relations; that a special interstate commerce tribunal be established in and for each district, with provision for joint sessions of two or more commissions on matters affecting two or more districts, and for appeal to a central commission at Washington, having a general appellate supervisory jurisdiction over all the subordinate tribunals, to correct their errors, regulate their practice, and reconcile their conflicting rulings—final appeal to be allowed to the United States Supreme Court on questions of law only?"

Mr. Braxton thinks that by the institution of special Federal rate-regulating tribunals uniformly, reasonableness, and consistency would be insured, conflicting rulings obviated by appeal to a central body, "whose jurisdiction over the entire Union would guard against narrow or petty action, and insure a comprehensive grasp of the commercial and transportation conditions of the whole country." While Mr. Braxton's suggestions are not entirely new, they are especially worthy of consideration as representing the altered viewpoint of a man who has borne a conspicuous part in establishing State rate regulation of railroad rates. The Southern railway situation, where half a dozen States undertake the regulation of railway rates on transportation systems extending from the Potomac to the Gulf, has doubtless helped Mr. Braxton to

reach his conclusion that the Federal government would deal more justly with railroads than the local politicians.

We note, with polite regret, that the Sultan of Turkey's principal astrologer is dead. As you have doubtless surmised, he played quite a star part in affairs of state in the Sultan's neighborhood.

The Swiss government is considering the idea of outlawing "Merry Widow" hats. We do not blame the powers that be at all for this. The man of Switzerland naturally object to being crowded out into France, Germany, and Italy.

Old King George of England tried to make this country pay a tax on tea once, but we did not do it. However, we had quite an argument about it before we convinced him we meant business.

Since Mr. Wu objects to the band playing "Dixie" at banquets he attends, arrangements should be made to have "The Heavens Chime" recited in its stead.

An American piano manufacturing firm has been highly honored by the King of Portugal. Naturally, the honoree is playing it up in the newspapers to beat the band.

"This week's Life has a picture of a man driving a team of oxen from the right side. Why do not artists cultivate the sense of observation?" inquires the New York Mail. And then draw the man driving the team from the wrong side?

You see, that outspoken and refreshingly frank manner of saying things apropos on occasions is why so many West Virginians know him by no other name than that affectionate and well-meant "Steve."

A Massachusetts man claims to have invented "a machine by the use of which any misstatement or untruth may be absolutely determined." We are not quite sure we know what he means, but we are firm in the belief that he does not mean a political machine.

Dr. Eliot is one American citizen, we fancy, who admits that some after-dinner speeches are right up to the mark.

Every little bit "Uncle Andy" Carnegie takes advantage of the era of good feeling and hands some king a diplomococcus or so.

The Richmond Times-Dispatch brainstormed the other day about a "clubbing proposition between the Outlook, Tom Watson's Magazine, the Commoner, and La Follette's Weekly." That would be fine for people who like that sort of thing. Certainly, everything in creation would more than likely be clubbed to a frazzle at the hands of that aggregation.

There are rumors that the Gatun Dam construction has executed another slide—but just a little, just a bit of a slide, we presume.

The Advertiser Democrat, under the editorial guidance of Mr. Charles W. Weiser, known to the elect only as "Fud" Weiser, is very welcome to our sanctum. It has the sparkle and go one would naturally expect in the circumstances of its rejuvenated and rehabilitated condition. Long may it wave.

Congressman Edwards, of Georgia, thinks his salary is \$2,500 a year too much. And who are we to dispute it?

Well, it is hard to get the right angle in Tennessee politics nowadays, we suspect. The Nashville Tennessean insists that Gov. Patterson's future is all in the past, while the American insists that his real career is just opening up.

It is not just to say in behalf of our sweet, modest Washington girls that they are not suffering with that quality of bighead that hats would seem to some people to indicate.

"Kidnapping is a man's job," says "Pat" Crowe. He being, of course, a high authority on man and manhood.

In the spring a young man's fancy lightly turns to thoughts of love. And doctors say, perhaps to vex us, that that involves his solar plexus.

Nothing in the world so thrills the patriotic insides of a free-born American citizen as a planked star-spangled shield accompanied by a roe chaser. They are in our mind extensively nowadays, too.

Mr. "Champ" Clark used to be a college professor. Doubtless those obstreperous insurgents in the Democratic House minority remind him of a bunch of sophomores more than anything else he can think of.

We fear a number of heads will be cracked, incidentally, as the breaking of the "solid South" progresses.

"Ex-Crown Prince" Is the Most Becoming Title That George of Serbia ever wore.

Several years ago Congress passed a law to conserve the beauty of Niagara Falls by prescribing the quantity of water that might be taken out of the river above the falls for power plants. The law was to expire by limitation June 30 next, the idea being that by that time a pending treaty with Canada, dealing with the matter, would be ratified. But the treaty has not been ratified, and in the last days of the Congress preceding the present one a resolution having a like object in view—the conservation of the falls—was rushed through both Houses of Congress.

The period within which an arrangement may be made with Canada is extended for two years. For two years longer, accordingly, bridal couples on their honeymoon may cuddle up the falls, assured that their murmurs of undying love and labial smacks will not be heard.

THE NEW TARIFF.

They're fixed the tariff sure enough. In Man's own bungling way. They've raised the rate on women's stuff. It matters not what they say. Fine, feathers, above, perfume, and the like. The list begins:

They've also raised the tax on tea. And ornamental pins. Who wants free hides and iron ore? Who calls for cotton cloth? "Whatever 'baste' may be. It matters not what they say. Fine, feathers, above, perfume, and the like. The list begins:

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A LITTLE NONSENSE.

AS WE JOURNEY.

A wad of wealth we think we spy:
To grab that wad we quickly try.
Alack a-day!
In vain we exercise our stealth.
For suddenly that wad of wealth
Is jerked away.

In peevish mood we note a hat
And instantly we launch at that
A vicious kick.
The effort adds unto our woes;
We only say our tender toes
Against a brick.

Thus baffled at our every turn
By sad experience we learn
In painful schools.
While Life, the Joker, stands afar
And says derisively we are
But April fools.

That Accounts for It.

"What makes the Balkan states so
sassy?"
"Every one of them has a big brother."

The Humorists Notwithstanding.
Chorus girls are mostly young.
Many a woman with a number four foot
calls for a number four shoe.
There hasn't been a bootjack thrown at
a cat for fifty years.
Some of the Shakespeare clubs discuss
Shakespeare, and not the neighbors.
Women occasionally carry money
in their purses in addition to clipped poetry
and dress samples.

Not Deceived.

"Never in my life have I deceived my
wife."
"Same here. Mine only pretends to be-
lieve the yarns I tell."

The Elusive Pocketbook.

To get rich quick, you may espay
A chance to-day.
But on such chances don't rely;
They seldom pay.

Shared Around.

"How do you humorists manage to con-
nect so many jokes?"
"Oh, there are hundreds of humorists
in this country, and every once in a
while one of them has an idea."

Still, They Marry.

A woman with a hub is pretty sure of
grub and of a place to sleep; occasionally,
a dress, and that is all, I guess. Yet
women take the leap.

A Cold World.

"I say it's unjust," declared the poet.
"How now, old man?"
"Why does everybody think it isn't
safe to loan a genius money?"

DESERTION AND DIVORCE.

Significance of the Principal Cause
of Legal Separations.

From the Boston Herald.

It is significant that by far the most
frequent cause of divorce is desertion.
Divorces on this ground are not neces-
sarily, not always, an evil from the sec-
ular point of view. There are in every
community many dissolute, improvident
husbands who depend for a living on the
hard toil of their wives. In time most
of them are thrown out or driven away
to look out for themselves. A divorce in
such a case leaves the wife free to devote
her earnings to the benefit of her chil-
dren without annoyance. There are other
husbands who, in periods of business de-
pression especially, tire of the burden of
maintaining a family, and quietly disap-
pear, cruelly abandoning their wives, who
support is their first duty. Doubtless the
prolonged hard times following the panic
of 1873 had much to do with the dismal
divorce statistics of 1878-84. A Chicago
charity official declares that there are
more than 25,000 deserted wives in that
community. So frequent is desertion that
it has been made a penal offense in a
nearly every State, so that the deserters
may be extradited wherever found.

Divorces on the grounds of non-support
and desertion thus make up the largest
part of the statistics, and something may
be said in defense of the wife who pro-
tectively abandons her husband, who, in
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THREE WINS OUT OF FIVE.

Wall Street Conditions All Favor
the Insiders.

John Barr, in Everybody's Magazine.

There is nothing more sordid in Wall
street than the use that is made in the
stock market by insiders (directors, bank-
ers, and their like) of information access-
ible only to themselves. A divorce in
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A DAY OF FOOLS.

If all the fools would only play their silly
lot of tricks to-day, and then, pretend that
they are sane until All Fools' Day comes
again, I would not murmur when I kick a
hat that's loaded with a brick. I would
not foolishly repine when stumbling o'er a
hempen twine that jesters stretched across
the walk to make folks fall around the
block. I would not take it quite so hard
that I am packing round a card inviting
people me to kick, and do it off and do it
quick. The time-worn jokes might well
beguile an April hour and cause a smile,
if there were only ironclad rules prohib-
iting the buoyant fools from spreading
folly through the year; that's asking far
too much, I fear.

WALT MASON.
(Copyright, 1909, by George Matthew Adams.)

WASHINGTON CHAT.

By THE SPECTATOR.

The splendor of Whitehall Reid's regime
in England, as American Ambassador
compared to the simplicity of the one
that will follow when President Eliot is
appointed his successor will show the
English people two extremes of life in
this republic.

It is safe to say that Whitehall Reid's
expenditures in London ran into hundreds
of thousands of dollars a year. He kept
up a palace in town, another in the coun-
try, and was one of the most frequent
hosts in the court circle. President Eliot's
yearly income will hardly amount to as
much as Mr. Reid spent in a month, and
yet those who have been entertained at
the Eliot home in Cambridge need have
no fear for the prestige of America while
he is ambassador at the Court of St.
James, and he will set a standard of sim-
plicity and elegance that, no matter what
his wealth, it would be wise for his
countrymen to adopt. The prodigality of
an American multi-millionaire visiting or
living in Europe gives the people of that
continent an entirely wrong impression
of Americans and what our diplomats
should aim to bring about is to have our
country better understood by the people
to whom they are accredited.

President Roosevelt's administration
will be noted for what was accomplished
in diplomatic affairs, and the work of
the men he appointed to fill the impor-
tant posts will stand out in history, as
will the men themselves; for it must be
admitted that the men President Roose-
velt chose to represent us abroad were
all possessed of sufficient wealth and so-
cial training to maintain their legations
and embassies in style equal to that set
by their colleagues.

Mr. Roosevelt's most important ap-
pointments were undoubtedly those of Mr.
Reid and Mr. Tower, but neither of these
men could be cited as typical Americans;
they are rather citizens of the world,
who order their lives by an international
standard. Dr. Eliot, on the contrary, al-
though born in England, is an American
to the very core, the same sort of an
American that Mrs. James Bryce is an
Englishman, a citizen who, knowing all
the best and worst in other countries,
all the best about women in this one, is yet
true to the latter, content to accept its
traditions and to abide by its standards.

It is charged by traveling Americans
and Americans resident on the other side
that some of the multi-millionaire diplo-
mats stationed at the various capitals
in Europe have sought to separate their
American friends from the people to
whom they are accredited. This is ex-
actly what they are sent there not to do.
An ambassador or a minister should be a
medium to make the country he repre-
sents and the country to which he is ac-
credited better known to one another. This
has been in Washington, and in London,
James Russell Lowell did it in England,
Andrew D. White in Germany, Elihu R.
Washburn in France—to go as far back
as the Franco-Prussian war in 1870, when
Mr. Bryce was American Minister there—and
James Bryce is doing in America.

Mr. Buchanan, former American Min-
ister to the Argentine Republic, and since
his six years of service there special
ambassador on several important mis-
sions, has been more or less lionized since
he has been in Washington, and his good
reason, for he has done more than
any one in the last decade to straighten
out the diplomatic tangle of this govern-
ment. Last summer, when every
country that goes to make up Central
America seemed to be boiling and seeth-
ing and was in a belligerent state against
every other country in the world, it was
Mr. Buchanan and Ambassador Creel who
went to the United States and secured ad-
vance on visits of courtesy to the various
affected governments, and gave them the
velvet hand of friendship which covered
the steel hand of power. They were re-
spected with all possible honors, and
when they left the visited countries fully
understood that this government would
brook no foolish uprisings.

That diplomatic mission finished to the
satisfaction of the State Department, Mr.
Buchanan was sent to Venezuela, where
he was successful in smoothing out the
difference between this country and that
belligerent land, which, since the days of
Tolivar, has been the quarry to so many
ambitious adventurers. He returns now
with that mission accomplished, and is
enjoying to the full the honors and
homage, the dining and winging invariably
offered to the heroes in his profession;
for somehow it seems the only way to
show admiration for a diplomat is to feast
him.

According to a noted Venezuelan who
was in town not long since, the reason
why the affairs of that country are in
such a deplorable state is that most of
the young Venezuelans, who should take
an active part in politics, are narrow and
insular. These youths scorn foreign edu-
cation, foreign travel, and are impervious
to foreign influences, and remain faithful
to the traditions of their ancestors, fol-
lowing their parents, and effect their amuse-
ments, and do not let their "cra" as they
do in Spain, but believe that South Amer-
ica is for South Americans, and pin their
faith to the girl who wears the mantilla
and hope the United States will never
blast the dolce far niente of the South.
In a word, they dream their lives away.

In this connection it should be remem-
bered that the United States was the
first country to send a diplomatic rep-
resentative to Venezuela after it sepa-
rated from Colombia and set up an in-
dependent government, and we were rep-
resented there continuously until recent-
ly, when diplomatic relations were discon-
tinued. Some of the American ministers
played a rather important part in the
history and development of the country.
An American envoy was responsible for
the building of the railway from the sea
to Caracas, one of the boldest bits
of engineering in the world, and by far
the most important railroad of the country.
Another representative from the
United States was able to lend the then
President vital assistance during a re-
bellion, and, indeed, saved the govern-
ment to which he was accredited, and
later on it was Minister Scruggs who
was mainly responsible for the attitude
which the United States took in refer-

ence to the Guayana boundary dispute,
and, indirectly, for President Cleveland's
famous message on that subject, which
caused such consternation in England.
These Venezuelans have reason to be
grateful to the Americans—and until Cas-
tro's time they were, a fact that may
be generally speaking, easier and pleas-
anter for this country's envoy to Carac-
as, but in many ways increased his re-
sponsibility.

HUMORS OF THE TARIFF.

How Consumer is Deceived in Al-
leged Reductions.

From the Chicago Tribune.

There are in the Payne tariff bill a few
illustrations of the ingenious way in
which a duty can be raised, while the
artless consumer is made to believe that
it has been lowered.

Take, for instance, linoleum, an article
of common use among those who are not
particularly well to do. Under the pres-
ent law there is a duty of 8 cents a
square yard and 15 per cent ad valorem
on all under twelve feet in width. On
all over that width the duty is 20 cents
a yard and 20 per cent ad valorem. The
Ways and Means Committee in its sum-
mary of reductions says: "Linoleum
above nine feet from 20 cents a square
yard and 20 per cent ad valorem to 12
cents and 15 per cent ad valorem."

This is an increase, not a decrease.
There were imported a year ago about
100,000 square yards of linoleum above
twelve feet in width, and 4,574,000 square
yards under that width. Probably three-
fourths of the goods imported under the
duty ranged in width from nine feet
to nearly twelve feet. So what really is
proposed is that the bulk of the importa-
tions shall pay 4 cents more a square
yard than at present, as if the duty
were a display of ingenuity not of a
praiseworthy kind. The consumers may
not be able to see any fun in the joke.
The farmer and the workman who do
the fun of it.

In the case of cast polished plate glass
an